



# EMC News

April 2, 2003

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## ENERGY COMMITTEE

The energy committee met on January 14, February 27 and March 18. Our first issue of the year has been the Cayuga Green Project in downtown Ithaca and its shading effects on the library solar panels. We are in the process of examining the effects of the shading on the electricity output of the panels, estimating the potential costs of such shading, and exploring possible alternatives. Unfortunately, the county has little clout in the process.

The ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) process of county emission reductions is well under way. The county is participating in NYSERDA's "Flextech" program to investigate avenues for cost savings and emission reductions within county buildings. The committee continues to explore ways of reducing county fleet emissions, and talks with MEGA about possible purchases of green electricity for the county are continuing.

The committee's goals for the year include

- examination of and advocacy for changes in New York's net metering laws.
- study of the costs of providing green power vs. vanilla, and why does green power cost more?
- continue to monitor and report on the library solar panels.
- continue to support the implementation of the ICLEI emissions reduction process. We are currently working towards Milestone 3, developing a Local Action Plan.
- develop community ties and partnerships so that we can expand emissions reduction programs beyond county government to the community as a whole. A first step in this process will be an energy workshop this spring.

The local energy cooperative, Co-opPlus, is still accepting members at least until April 30. If anyone is interested, please have them contact Kenny Christianson at (607) 277 - 1566 or [coopplusenergy@yahoo.com](mailto:coopplusenergy@yahoo.com).

- Submitted by Kenny Christianson

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Our Earthday 2003 table will feature an appearance by "Dioxin Man", who will simulate how he can easily produce a small amount of dioxin using only a burn barrel and common household trash. (Don't try this at home!) We will also be updating our burn barrel brochure, and have a petition to sign supporting NYS Assembly Burn Barrel Bill A.05884, which would prohibit open burning of solid waste. Earthday is April 27 in DeWitt Park, 12-5 pm.

We decided not to produce a Jet ski information table for the WRC waterweek in May.

The EMC Web Page will be linked to the County's Planning site for now.

We discussed shading mitigation by the City of Ithaca for the TCPL PV panels. Steve figures the monthly loss would be about \$600. If the City spent this amount on Windpower blocks, the annual production of emission free electricity would be almost double the expected output from the library system of 150,000 kWh. We could also encourage the City of Ithaca to join the Cities for Climate Protection program, which now involves 18% of all US greenhouse gas emissions.

- Submitted by Steve Nicholson

## ON THE NEW BOOK SHELF AT TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Hubbert's Peak : The Impending Oil Shortage*  
By Kenneth S. Deffeyes 2001

This is a fascinating and chilling account by an oil geologist, updating the work of Dr. M. King Hubbert, who successfully predicted in 1956 that the US peak for oil production would occur in the mid seventies. Applying this method to world-wide production, he finds:

"The resulting estimate gives a peak production year of 2003. Other published estimates, using variations on Hubbert's methods, give peak years from 2004-2009. I honestly do not have an opinion as to the exact date for two reasons: (1) the revisions of OPEC reserves may or not reflect reality; (2) OPEC production capacities are

closely guarded secrets. If your country has surplus production capacity today, you are a player in the global oil game. If your wells are currently producing to capacity, you are merely a spectator."

"This much is certain: no initiative put in place starting today can have a substantial effect on the peak production year. No Caspian Sea exploration, no drilling in the South China Sea, no SUV replacements, no renewable energy projects can be brought on at a sufficient rate to avoid a bidding war for the remaining oil. At least, let's hope that the war is waged with cash instead of with nuclear weapons."

When we reach the Hubbert Peak, we will have used half of all the recoverable oil that ever existed on our planet.

- Submitted by Steve Nicholson

### ***A GUIDEBOOK TO CAYUGA LAKE***

By Bill Foster

Watershed Educator

Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

In 2000, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network published **Issues in the Cayuga Lake Watershed**, which introduced key water quality concerns to a general audience. As a follow-up to that publication, the Network proposed the creation of a guidebook that would more directly outline what residents might do to address those issues. Along a parallel track, the Tompkins County Water Resources Council has allocated resources to create a **Cayuga Lake Book** that would address similar objectives. The similarity of these projects has been seen as an opportunity for synergy, and the projects have been combined.

Envisioned is a booklet intended to speak most directly to individual residents in the watershed regarding the relevance of specific watershed issues, and measures they might take to affect a role in those issues. The Network will work with WRC and other local stakeholders to outline the overall content. Perhaps the aspect of the project that makes it unique, however, will be the incorporation of very personalized perspective essays written by students participating in the Agricultural and Environmental Sciences class in the BOCES New Visions Program at Cornell. It is our hope that the insights these students can bring to the **Cayuga Lake Book** will greatly enhance the value of the publication for a broad audience of readers.

With the guidance of an advisory committee, Network educator Bill Foster will work with the students on the content and presentation during the spring of 2003. Our target publication date set for August. Educational resources such as this one, geared toward reducing non-point source pollution, are especially timely for

Tompkins County communities in light of new Storm Water Phase II regulations, which require municipalities to conduct public education as part of a larger effort to reduce the adverse affects of storm waters.

Municipalities will be provided with multiple copies, as will teachers, the Chamber of Commerce, Soil and Water Conservation District, Cooperative Extension, and Health and Planning Departments. Free copies will be made available at public events as well. For more information contact Mr. Foster at the Network office (607-532-4104 or [educator@cayugalake.org](mailto:educator@cayugalake.org)).

- Submitted by Christian Boissonnas

### **MUNICIPAL REPORTS**

***The Towns of Enfield, Ithaca and Ulysses will report in the May EMC News.***

### **ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROGRAM**

We are looking for a volunteer coordinator for the portion of highway the EMC adopted last fall. Located on Route 13 between Warren Road and NYSEG, an estimated four trash and debris clean-ups should be scheduled throughout the year. Call Heather McDaniel at 274-5560 for more information or to volunteer.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

*(for more info, contact Christian Nielsen)*

**April 3** - Cool Daylighting: A Green Building Design Strategy, Buffalo, NY (Sponsored by NYSERDA)

**April 29** - 2003 Annual Federal Summit, Washington, DC  
[www.usgbc.org/News/usgbcnews\\_details.asp?ID=126](http://www.usgbc.org/News/usgbcnews_details.asp?ID=126)

**April 30 - May 2** - EnvironDesign7, Washington, DC  
[www.isdesignet.com/ED/ED7/events.html](http://www.isdesignet.com/ED/ED7/events.html)

**May 20-21** - 1st Annual SUNY-ESF Green Building Conference (same date: a separate talk on Geothermal Systems) Syracuse, NY

**June 4-7** - Mid-Atlantic Sustainability Conference  
Trenton, NJ, [www.nesea.org](http://www.nesea.org)

*Submitted by Christian Nielsen*

**See you at the next EMC Meeting!**  
**April 9, 2003**